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Recipes from the Bureau of Home Economics

AMERICAN CHEDDAR CHEESE

Nutritionally, cheese ranks alongside of meat as a source of efficient protein. That is, the protein can be used effectively by the body. Nutritionists also look with great favor on cheese for its calcium. Cheese is an excellent source of vitamin G and if it has been made out of whole milk, is rich in vitamin A.

Because cheese is such a highly concentrated food it should be eaten as a main part of the meal--not as an incidental tidbit.

Contrary to a notion some persons have, cheese is highly digestible. Difficulties that come from eating it are caused by taking it in too concentrated a form or in too large quantities at one time.

COOKING WITH CHEESE

First rule for cooking with cheese is to heat it slowly until the fat in the cheese melts and blends in with other ingredients. Cheese needs cooking at low temperature--over water or in a slow oven--because of its protein. Intense heat makes the curd tough and leathery.

Second rule for making successful cheese dishes is to break the cheese into small pieces before you heat it. Cheese broken into small bits will spread evenly among the other ingredients of the dish and it will cook in less time than when left in a big lump. Breaking cheese in small pieces also prevents the forming of a solid curd when the fat melts out. Grating is the easiest way to break up the cheese, if it is fairly dry. Otherwise, you can flake it with a fork, shave it thin, or press it through a fine sieve.

Whenever possible in cooking, combine cheese by first blending it into a sauce. Welsh rabbits, for instance, if made by mixing the cheese first into a white sauce mixture before combining with the egg will present none of the usual curdling problems--if, of course, temperature is kept low throughout.

CHEESE-WITH-CEREAL

Probably most familiar version of the cheese-and-cereal combination is baked macaroni and cheese. But you can also use cheese to give a flavor contrast to other bland cereals--such as spaghetti, rice, grits, and corn meal. Or make the cheese into a well-seasoned rabbit to serve on crisp toast or crackers. For a pleasing change you may like to use tomatoes with the cheese in one of these dishes.

Baked Cheese and Macaroni or Spaghetti

2 cups macaroni or spaghetti broken in small pieces
2 tablespoons flour
4 tablespoons well-flavored fat
2 cups milk
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 pound cheese, shaved thin
1 cup bread crumbs

Cook the macaroni or spaghetti in 2 quarts of boiling salted water until tender, and drain. Make a sauce with the flour, fat, milk, and salt. Take it from the stove, add the cheese, and stir until the cheese is melted. Place the macaroni or spaghetti in a buttered baking dish in alternate layers with the cheese sauce, sprinkle the bread crumbs over the top, and bake in a moderate oven (350° F) for about 30 minutes.

Cheese Dreams

Slice bread thin and make into sandwiches with thin, even slices of cheese as the filling and a sprinkling of salt. In a heavy skillet melt sufficient fat to cover the bottom and brown the sandwiches delicately and rather slowly on both sides, adding more fat if necessary. Take care that the fat does not become so hot that it browns the sandwiches before the bread is heated through and the cheese melted. Serve the cheese dreams at once - with a salad of vegetables if you like.

Welsh Rabbit

1 pint milk
4 tablespoons melted fat
4 tablespoons flour
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 pound cheese, shaved thin
Onion

Heat the milk in a pan over hot water. Mix the melted fat, flour and salt, and stir into them a small quantity of heated milk. Add this to the remainder of the milk, stir until thickened, add the cheese, and any seasoning you like. Beat lightly until the cheese has melted. Pour a little of the cheese mixture into the well-beaten egg, then add this to the rabbit, and cook for 2 or 3 minutes longer. Drop a piece of sliced onion into the rabbit to give it flavor if you like. Remove it just before you serve the rabbit on thin crisp toast or crackers.

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Cheese Toast

1 pound cheese
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons flour mixed with 2 tablespoons water
2 eggs
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder

Shave the cheese into thin small pieces. Heat the milk in a double boiler, thicken with the flour which has been mixed with the water, and cook for 5 minutes. Add the beaten eggs, the cheese, and salt and cook slowly until the cheese has melted and the mixture is thick and creamy. Allow it to cool; then add the baking powder.

Toast one side of the bread. Spread the cheese mixture thickly on the untoasted side to the very edge. If the cheese mixture does not come to the edges of the bread, they become brown and hard. Brown the cheese delicately under a low broiler flame or in the oven. If desired, place a strip of crisp bacon across each slice of cheese toast. Serve it hot from the oven. This recipe makes enough for 12 to 14 slices of bread.

The cheese mixture, except for the baking powder, may be prepared the day before it is to be used. Since the mixture stiffens on standing, heat until soft in a double boiler, let it cool, and add the baking powder. Then spread the cheese on the bread, and toast.

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Tomato Rabbit

2 tablespoons butter or other fat
1/2 cup finely cut celery, if desired
1/2 chopped green pepper, if desired
1/2 small onion, chopped
2 tablespoons flour
1 pint cooked tomatoes
1/2 pound cheese, shaved thin
1 teaspoon salt
2 eggs

Melt the fat in a heavy skillet, add the celery, green pepper, and onion, cook for a few minutes, and stir frequently. Sprinkle the flour over the cooked vegetables, pour in the tomatoes, and add the cheese and salt. Cook over low heat and stir until the mixture thickens and the cheese is melted. Pour some of this mixture into the well-beaten eggs, then pour all back into the skillet, and continue to cook over low heat until thickened and creamy. Serve on crisp toast or crackers.

CHEESE WITH VEGETABLES

When cheese is combined with vegetables, it supplies protein to make the vegetables suitable as a main dish. Cheese goes especially well in scalloped potatoes, cabbage, corn, or a mixture of vegetables. And white sauce flavored with tangy cheese dresses up cooked broccoli, cauliflower, or asparagus.

Creamed Potatoes with Cheese

Peel and dice 6 medium-sized potatoes, boil until tender in water to cover. Make a white sauce by blending 3 tablespoons fat with 3 tablespoons flour, add 1 cup milk, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and enough grated cheese to give it the cheese flavor you desire. Stir the sauce until it thickens. Add to the cooked potatoes and serve at once.

Scalloped Cabbage, Spaghetti, and Cheese

1 1/2 cups spaghetti broken in small pieces
3 tablespoons flour
3 tablespoons butter or other fat
2 cups milk
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 pound cheese
1 quart shredded cabbage
1 cup bread crumbs

Cook the spaghetti in boiling salted water for 20 minutes, and drain. Make a sauce of the flour, fat, milk, and salt. Shave up the cheese, add to the hot sauce, and stir until melted. Put the cabbage, spaghetti, and sauce in a buttered baking dish in layers and cover the top with the bread crumbs. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes in a moderate oven.

Scalloped Vegetables with Cheese

Mix two or more kinds of fresh-cooked or left-over vegetables, such as string beans, carrots, peas, corn, and place in a shallow baking dish. Pour over the vegetables a thin white sauce to which cheese has been added. Cover with bread crumbs and bake in a moderate oven until the sauce bubbles and the crumbs are brown.

CHEESE IN QUICKBREADS

When cheese is mixed in batter it must be grated first. These fine particles can be thoroughly mixed with the dry ingredients, so the cheese will not cling together and become stringy.

Cheese Muffins

1/2 cup grated cheese
2 cups sifted flour
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
0 to 2 tablespoons sugar
1 egg, beaten
1 cup milk

Sift dry ingredients together. Add the grated cheese. Combine the egg and milk. Add to the dry ingredients all at once. Stir just enough to moisten and give the mixture a rough appearance. Fill greased muffin pans two-thirds full. Bake in a hot oven 400 to 425° F. for about 20 minutes.

Cheese Biscuits

Add grated cheese to the sifted dry ingredients in your favorite biscuit recipe. Add about 1/2 cup of grated cheese to a recipe calling for 1 1/2 cups sifted flour.

Cheese Spoon Bread

1 cup grated cheese
2 or 3 eggs
1 cup corn meal
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 cup cold water
2 cups hot milk
2 tablespoons fat, melted

Mix the corn meal and salt thoroughly. Combine with the cold water, and stir until smooth. Add the hot milk, stir, and cook over low heat until the mixture thickens. Add cheese to the thickened milk mixture. Stir until it has melted. Blend a small amount of the hot mixture with the beaten eggs. Yolks and whites may be beaten separately if desired. Combine all ingredients. Pour into a well-greased hot pan or baking dish and bake for 45 or 50 minutes in a moderately hot oven. Serve from the dish in which baked.

Baked Eggs with Cheese

Break the desired number of eggs into a hot, well-greased, shallow baking dish. Add butter or other fat, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Pour enough milk over the eggs just to cover them. Sprinkle with a mixture of soft cheese and dry bread crumbs. Bake in a very moderate oven until the eggs are set and the crumbs are brown.

Cheese Fondue

4 eggs
2 cups hot milk
2 cups soft bread crumbs
1 cup cheese sliced very thin
1 tablespoon fat
Salt, to taste

Beat the eggs well. Mix the milk, bread crumbs, cheese, fat, and salt. Stir this mixture into the beaten eggs. Pour into a well-greased shallow pan and bake in a moderate oven for about 25 minutes, or until set and lightly browned on top. Serve at once.

Cheese Souffle

4 eggs
1 1/2 cups milk
1 cup fine dry bread crumbs
1 tablespoon butter or other fat
1/2 pound cheese
3/4 teaspoon salt

Heat the milk, bread crumbs, and fat in a double boiler. Shave the cheese into thin slices, add it to the hot mixture, and stir until the cheese has melted. Add this mixture to the well-beaten egg yolks. Season to taste. Fold the hot mixture into the stiffly beaten egg whites containing the salt, pour into a greased dish, and bake in a very moderate oven (300° F.) for one hour, or until set in the center. Serve immediately.

CHEESE MISCELLANY

Apple Pie with Melted Cheese

After an apple pie is baked, cover the top with American cheese cut into thin slices or grated, and put in a very moderate oven (300° to 325° F.) until the cheese is melted. Serve at once while the cheese is warm. Either a freshly baked or a cold pie may be prepared in this way.

Dried Fruit Baked with Cheese and Bread

6 eggs
2 cups hot milk
2 cups soft bread crumbs
1 cup cheese, sliced thin
1 cup dried fruit (soaked and chopped)
Salt to taste
1 tablespoon fat

Beat the eggs well. Mix the milk, bread crumbs, cheese, dried fruit, and salt. Stir this mixture into the beaten eggs. Pour into a well-greased shallow pan and bake in a moderate oven for about 25 minutes, or until set and lightly browned on top. Serve at once.

Grated cheese tops off any number of salads. Try it on a salad of vivid red beets for color and taste contrast.

When cheese sandwiches are toasted under a broiler flame, the bread "insulates" the cheese against too much heat. If the sandwich is the open-face variety be very sure to have a very low flame.

Many homemakers like to grate cheese and have it in a separate dish to sprinkle into soup or over such dishes as spaghetti, instead of cooking it with the dish.

Good balanced meal based on a main cheese dish might include a cereal, such as bread -- a vegetable, such as tomatoes, lettuce, or spinach -- and fruit for dessert.